LIFE SERVICE

A CALL TO CHRISTIAN YOUTH

AMOS JOHN TRAVER

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LIFE SERVICE

A Call to Christian Youth

AMOS JOHN TRAVER
General Secretary
The Luther League of America

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TO FLORENCE

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AND SHADOW

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PREFACE

I have met the youth of our day within the shadow of the Christian Church. To thousands of our fine, frank American young folks, I have been privileged to speak. With the impression of these young and healthy Christians vividly on my consciousness, I cannot be so tremendously anxious about the future. The coming generation of Christian leaders will be clear-eyed, impatient with sham, sure of essentials and followers of a living Christ.

This simple presentation of a vital Christianity has grown out of addresses prepared for college and Church youth. That many young folks found them a help in discovering their way of life service has led me to place them in a more permanent form. They are published with the prayer that those who read may be led to a more fervent practice of the presence of Christ.

"Life Service" is positive. It spends little time in speculation and less in argument. It takes for granted an historical Jesus. It asserts a living Lord. It places Him frankly in just that place where we live. It only pleads with us to realize Him and depend upon Him.

In the words of Reverend Francis Pott:

Thou, Who art beyond the farthest
Mortal eye can scan,
Can it be that Thou regardest
Songs of sinful man?
Can we know that Thou art near us,
And wilt hear us?
Yes, we can!

AMOS JOHN TRAVER

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CHAPTER ONE

THE DIVINE BALANCE

"It is well to live in the valley sweet
Where the work of the world is done,
Where the reapers sing in the fields of wheat,
As they toil till the set of sun.
But beyond the meadows, the hills I see,
Where the noises of traffic cease;
And I follow a voice that calleth to me
From the hilltop regions of peace.

"Aye, to live is sweet in the valley fair,
And to toil till the set of sun;
But my spirit yearns for the hilltop's air
When the day and its work are done;
For a Presence breathes o'er the silent hills,
And its sweetness is living yet;
The same deep calm all the hillside fills
As breathes over Olivet."

—*Quoted by J. R. Miller in*
"The Lesson of Love"

LIFE SERVICE

CHAPTER ONE

The Divine Balance

The Master was perfectly unselfish, yet in the busiest seasons of His ministry He found time for prayer. Some of these prayers were for Himself. We also know that His custom was to go to the synagogue. Did He go as an example for others, for the opportunity to teach, or did He go for holy food for His own soul? He was a student of the Scriptures. He began early to store His mind with the writings of psalmist and prophet. All this is to say that Jesus found it a perfectly necessary and a perfectly normal part of the program of His life to care for His own mental and spiritual development. Divinely mysterious, if we think of Him only as Son of God, but divinely reasonable when we recall that He was the Son of Man.

A great temptation comes to all young folks as they prepare for life service. It is the temptation to hurry preparation past the point of safety. I recall a young man who was earnest,—so earnest about preaching the gospel! He went to school, with little patience. He did not stand

the test of the years, and leaving the signboards of the traveled way of preparation, went over the fence by a short cut into the ministry of another communion. Jesus spent thirty years training for a three years' ministry. That fact cannot be told too often to the youth of to-day. There is a divine balance of impression and expression in the life of Jesus. "For their sakes," He tells us, "I sanctify myself." We may in like manner say that we are saved to serve.

Why be satisfied with the shallows of life when there are the deep still waters upon which to sail? Why rave about the rushing stream and forget the mountainside spring? Why measure Christianity in the terms of hospitals, orphans' homes, and organized charities, and leave unevaluated the spirit of Christian love that built and manned them?

How careful our Lord was with His apostles' training! True He sent them out on missions of service, and Judas carried a bag for the poor; but if the writers of the gospels chose their materials with divine discretion, a vastly larger emphasis was made on impression than on expression. Transfiguration Day with its visitors from heaven, its glory light, and the voice of the Father, made impressions that could never be erased. In later years the memories of that day must have played some part in the courageous witness of the three favored apostles. We too have our days of vivid impression, glory-days that flood in on our lives with a new assurance of God,

and a new demand for consecration. But there are other days when it is by painful, slow, patient effort that we win our way into the Presence.

Recall once more the story of the Transfiguration. After the mountain comes the valley. A poor father, with a devil-possessed son, is there waiting for help. Jesus promptly heals the son and gives him back to his father. First the glory, then the gift; first the lessons, then the practice; first impression, then expression; divine balance, holy rhythm!

"Impression without expression is pure waste." It might be put in still stronger terms; for there is no impression without expression; there is no faith without works. I recall a college professor who understood youth as well as he understood his subject. One day I entered his classroom rather sketchily prepared for recitation. It seemed sometimes as though he possessed an uncanny second sight by which he could spot the unprepared. This morning, of course, he called on me. I did have a general idea as to the answer, entirely too general to satisfy the doctor. Nor was I satisfied. After stuttering a bit, in a wild attempt to find the words, the professor looking on with twinkling eyes, I gave up with one final attempt at an alibi: "I know, Doctor, I know; but I just can't put it into words." Quick as a flash came back the answer, "You do not know what you cannot express." I thought a minute, then gave up forever. There was no argument. If you could know a thing, and

couldn't express it, how could you possibly prove your knowledge?

"Streams rise in the uplands, but they never stay there." The love of Jesus Christ is the richest possession of our personal life, but we cannot keep it and have it. Even the Church that tries to live for itself alone in due process of time does not live at all. Dear saintly Doctor Alfred Hiller of Hartwick did much to shape my early life. I well remember a day in class when he said, "Boys, if you get a poor little run-down mission church, with the shingles coming off the roof, and most of the pews empty on a Sunday, start right in preaching 'Missions,' and you will soon have a slate roof and a full church."

He was right. Church after church have I seen rise to prosperity by the way of the stoop of service. Man or organization, the principle holds divinely true: impression is for expression.

The Service Outlet

There is the outlet of humble service. How easy it is to acknowledge all this, but how hard to apply it to our own lives. We have been thrilled with the call to life service. Perhaps we could name the great days when the Lord seemed most near, as at some great convention, when, swayed by the eloquence of one of God's prophets, we have felt the urge to give life in one great outburst of self-sacrifice. We hear missionaries speak, whose own lives are full of heroic deeds, and we feel the

thrilling call to such a life service. The test comes when we return home to the commonplace of daily life.

One recalls that mother who had sacrificed everything so that her girl could have advantages she had been denied. Over the back fence she told her neighbor how glad she was her daughter had made the scrub team at college, she would be such a help to her when she came home! There is a Christian call for scrubbing as well as for preaching. Filling a wood-box or sweeping a room may be the outlet God has set for the stored up glory of our Mounts of Transfiguration. Even such an humble, homely thing as the dishwashing after a League social is not usually thought of as having any religious significance. Well do I recall a certain League. The entertainment committee has worked hard to plan a live program. Everybody has had a good time. Now it is breaking-up time. One after another slips hurriedly over to the coat racks, recalling suddenly how urgently mother had commanded an early return. Good night is called cheerily, on the run. Then the good old faithful few who, from long experience, know every nick and crack in the Ladies' Aid dishes, turn to the lonely task of washing up. No service is too humble to be an outlet for the love of Christ. Even a cup of cold water becomes an index of sincerity. Translate this into your life, right now! Think! The humble demands for service are first calls to heroic deeds.

The Witness Outlet

Then there are the outlets in witness. For years I knew an Italian who was a good workman on worn shoes. Being a clergyman, such a friendship was one to cultivate. I learned to know a great deal about the life of this son of Italy. I met his wife many times, and believe I was one of the first to be told about the new baby that came to their home. But it was years before, as I sat in his shop one day, the conversation turned to religion. What was my surprise to find that he had been estranged from his church even before coming to America. He was open to the direct appeal of evangelical Christianity. Great was my joy in the triumph of Christ in his life. With it was the regret of wasted years. Why is it that we can talk of everything else but the most important topic of conversation? We can attend church Sunday after Sunday; feel the emotional uplift of great services; hear music that gives foretaste of heavenly choirs, and sermons that search the very depth of our being; and then go out from these very powerhouses of inspiration to walk the streets unconcerned and untouched by the need of human souls.

It was in a great hospital. The visiting pastor went from bed to bed with a cheery smile and a pleasantry for each patient. "Jimmy," he said, "I suppose you were always a good boy and went to Sunday school, weren't you?" And Jimmy answered with a grin, "Sure thing." On he went his complacent way. Jimmy waited till he was out

of hearing, and then called to the fellow in the next bed, "What did the old guy think I'd tell him?" No, Jimmy never went to Sunday school, and that very afternoon Jimmy was operated on, and the next day Jimmy died. Even the minister of Jesus misses his divinely given opportunity to witness. What an appalling sum total of unspoken testimony must the angel of records write against the followers of Christ in just one day! A Christianity we cannot tell is a Christianity we do not possess.

Saved for life service, consecrated to conquer for Christ, this is the divine intention. Love holds the balance as surely as justice. Thank God for that! How stands the balance in our lives? Have we gone to God that we might go to men? Have we loved Christ that we might love our neighbor? Have we found a faith that we might demonstrate a good work? Has impression been for expression, and expression the fruit of impression? If so, the balance bar of our lives stands at par.

A contest was offered to artists. The subject was "Consecration." The judges had little trouble in eliminating the failures, till but two paintings remained. The one pictured a young girl in the center of a group of lepers. She was pouring ointment on their wounds. The other offered a girl in nurse's uniform. She was kneeling at a chair in prayer. Beside her on the floor was a tray with invalid's fare. The door behind her was partly open to show a ward with beds. The

final decision was unanimously for this artist, who built into his conception the balanced life. Christian consecration is more than service, beautiful as that service may be. Christian life service finds the happy balance, the divine balance, between "Come ye" and "Go ye." Are both in your life?

CHAPTER TWO

SINCERITY

" 'A man must live!' We justify
Low shift, and trick, to treason high,
A little vote for a little gold,
To a whole senate bought and sold,
With this self-evident reply.

"But is it so? Pray tell me why
Life at such cost you have to buy?
In what religion were you told
'A man must live'?
There are times when a man must die.

"Imagine for a battle cry
From soldiers with a sword to hold,
From soldiers with the flag unrolled,
The coward's whine, this liar's lie,
'A man must live!' "

—*Quoted by Dr. Robert E. Speer in "The Marks of a Man"*

CHAPTER TWO

Sincerity

I take you back to the days when Rome collected the world's taxes but Greece ruled the world's thinking. These were the days when Grecian artists and Grecian authors and Grecian sculptors were creating their masterpieces, which are still the wonder and despair of modern critics. A sculptor is hard at his work. With hammer and chisel he chips and breaks at his marble block. Now the statue is nearing completion. No time for the workman to become careless. But he has gone moon-dreaming for the moment, thinking of the undying name he is creating with his art. A blow too hard, a chisel misplaced and his months-long toil is for nothing. No, not for nothing. He takes wax and most skillfully mixes it with dust from the marble. He fits it into the broken place and molds it, till the most careful eye will not detect it. His statue is finished, he reaps his reward. The statue stands in the courtyard of a Roman palace. Years come and go. The sun and rain do their work, and the deceit of the workman comes out into the staring light of day. The Romans spoke of such camouflaged art as "waxed," while the honest work that could stand the test of time they called "without wax" or in their language *sine cera.* We have appropriated their name for that which is what it seems, the

quality of honesty that will stand all the tests of time.

The wax will stand for a while but not forever. We fool ourselves when we think to hide successfully our inconsistencies. We fool ourselves because for a while it is possible to fool others. Our service too may be accepted and on our head may rest the wreath of fame, but some day the test of time will reveal our faults. When I went to my first parish it was necessary to buy furniture for the parsonage. Among other important purchases was an office chair for my study. It was a perfectly good-looking chair, and comfortable; too comfortable for a study. One day as I sat in my chair I fell asleep. My weight rested so solidly against one chair arm that it gave way in a very pronounced fashion. On investigation I found that there had been an old crack at one of the screw holes. It had been puttied and varnished and rubbed down till it could pass the factory inspection. It had looked all right; but it was insincere, untrustworthy, "waxed."

The Greeks themselves used another figure for sincerity, a word meaning "searched by the sun." The kind of a life that stands the test of the X-ray. The life that does not make believe.

"You know I say
Just what I think, and nothing more nor less.
And when I pray, my heart is in my prayer.
I cannot say one thing and mean another.
If I can't pray, I will not make believe."

A Searching Test

Sincerity is the world's prize virtue. The world will put up with the mistaken man, but it despises the man who pretends. So far the instinctive likes and dislikes of the world are those of the Master. How he hated hypocrisy, and how he exposed it! We will remember that hypocrisy is a word from the stage. It means to play a role. Those rich Pharisees who played the part of pious virtue, but who hid within ambitious, scheming, jealous, miserly souls!—Jesus never spared them, though He spared the sinning woman, and praised the publican. Certainly a share of His popularity as a preacher was due to these attacks. The battle for sincerity is popular.

To a vast number of people sincerity has come to be a religion. They say that it does not make any difference what you believe, so long as you live it. It is not hard, nor is it necessary to show the shallowness of such thinking. Some of the world's sorriest messes have been the handiwork of perfectly sincere leadership.

On the other hand, no one can be truly religious without sincerity. Christianity implies sincerity. Jesus made his attack directly upon the heart of the sinner. He wanted no form that was without spirit, no bow of the body that left the soul erect. He Himself was ready to die rather than to make the least compromise of principle. Nothing less ought to be asked of His disciples. Nothing has brought more dishonor on the name of Christianity than the insincerities of Christians. Ask

the man on the street to follow Christ, and he will begin to tell you of the inconsistencies of Christians. The pity of it is that his data are usually correct. He knows the business and private life of Deacon So-and-so better than you do. And when he says that he is a better man without the Church, no doubt, upon the basis of moral standards, he is right.

Over the seas in the non-Christian lands the missionary faces this question first hand. The native hears with shining eyes the story of Jesus and His love. He finds in the new conception of God as a heavenly Father a rich joy that he has never known. The standards of Christian living and the hope in Christian dying change the whole foundation of his being. But what about these Christian nations that claw and tear at one another like tigers in the jungle? What of poison gas, Big Berthas, air raids, and submarine frightfulness? What of the exploitation of the wealth of their countries? What of the private lives of the representatives of great corporations and of great nations? We will take your Christ, they say, but not your Christianity. What shall we answer them? Bring out the alibis. Recall the frailty of man and the forgiving spirit of God through Jesus Christ. And still you have not met the challenge of inherent justice. A love of consistency is one of the remaining marks of the marred image of God. The demand that faith should be matched with life service and creed with conduct is forever facing Christianity.

Sincere About Christ

Sincerity calls upon us to re-examine the very purpose of living. Is it something more than a pious phrase to say that Jesus should be first in the life of the Christian? Do we honestly place Him there as we plan the day's work? How about our time? Does Jesus have the first claim there or do we give Him and His interests the time left over after we have done the things we want to do? How often we hear the answer, "I'm too busy," when we call on some one to aid in a Christian task! Our American school system is beginning at the very bottom to train our youth to think of the church last. Home work, club activities, extra curriculum interests! No time for weekday school of religion, no time for church.

What about our money? Do we give to His work as one of the regular demands on our income, or do we give the pennies that are left? A friend of mine once came to me to apologize for the fact that his League had not affiliated with the General League. His excuse was that his young folks were all high school students and did not have money for dues. High school students with no money for dues! Not the high school students I know. Fifteen cents are spent on ice cream and thirty-five cents on movies with as little thought as in our boyhood days we spent a nickle. It is a crime against the young folks and a crime against the Church to permit them to think that everything and everybody has a claim

on their money save Christ. "Did you bring your pennies to-day, children?" begins in the primary room in Sunday school the training that in the years that follow will leave the treasuries of the Church empty.

What about our talents, good old-fashioned name for the things we can do best? Boys who can debate in the English classes at school cannot speak in a devotional meeting. Men who can sell goods for fat commissions cannot say, "Old man, I wish you would come along with me to the men's class in Sunday school next Sunday. Our pastor teaches it and he is good. The fellowship is fine, too. I'll call for you and see that you are introduced." Girls who can sing jazz like larks, —or should it be blackbirds,—will not volunteer for the choir. Pianists who refuse to play in League and good organizers who will never take an office in a church society have a serious defect in their consciences. If Christ is first, if we are really sincere about His place in our lives, there will come a mighty change in our sense of values.

The Challenge of Eternity

Are we sincere about the destiny of life? Are we? There is a philosophy of life that says, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." That does not sound like Christianity. That does characterize a great many nominal Christian lives.

"Building, building, every day
Building for eternity."

We sing this hymn and then go on planing and

polishing, fitting and fixing the scaffolding of life. Will the world ever take much stock in our professions of belief in eternity so long as we live only for to-day? Jesus wants us to use the scales of heaven in weighing the things worth while on earth. Absurd to die for a cause, to stand up for the weak against the strong, to refuse a forbidden pleasure, to curb a single lust or passion, if death ends all. The open door of the Easter tomb leads out into a new life that finds its beginning right here and now. If we really believe that, if we are sincere about it, we will begin to live the life of a citizen of the Kingdom of God now.

St. Paul loved the church at Philippi. He prayed for them as well as he admonished them. "And this I pray . . . that ye may be sincere." It is a great prayer. Wide in its reaches as eternity. The sincere disciple faces Christianity as the greatest fact in life. Christianity's Christ becomes the comrade of everyday life. Its Cross wipes out worry as to God's love and offers assurance as to forgiveness. Its empty Tomb changes the tears of a mourning world into the laughter of hope. Its Pentecost inbreathes into human life the light of understanding and the power of living. Because I am a Christian, all this and more is mine. Before we go out to win the world to our faith let us be sure our faith is sincere. The world is waiting, cynical it is true, but waiting, for the man who believes and who lives his beliefs, the man who declares Christ, and who reveals Him. It has bowed in awe and

adoration at the foot of the Cross even when it did not understand the meaning of that Cross. The man who lives his Christian faith can rule the world. "And this I pray . . . . that ye may be sincere."

"Character is what one is in the dark." It is easy to wear the robe of devotion in the fellowship of the saints; to build booths on the Mount of Transfiguration when Jesus and the heavenly visitors are with us. The man who silently bows his head and says grace in a restaurant in a strange city and alone bears the marks of kingship. A graduate student in a great university, a Christian native of India, taken to a Chicago theatre, bowed his head in silent prayer as he took his seat. Why not? This sort of a man will never be caught off guard because he is not on guard. Remember John, the clerk, in the country store. He was keeping store alone when a customer came in. "Well, John, I see the master is out so you can give me a little better than good measure to-day." "Sir," answered John, "my Master is always in." Always in. Bring up your searchlight and flood the dark corners of such a life, and no shadowy places offer hiding for lurking devils. Let the sun beat down with the burning power of the tropics, let winds howl and rains drench, the man who permitted the Master to shape his soul into his own blessed image has no waxed over places to conceal. There is an ideal for your life. "This I pray . . . . that ye may be sincere."

CHAPTER THREE

PROGRAMS AND PERSONALITY

Oh earth, what unsolved mystery
You hide beneath your tinseled gild?
How is it you withhold the key
To queries that are never stilled?

Great wars are waged, great men are slain,
Removed e'er half their course is run;
And conflicts grim, through love of gain,
Line class 'gainst class, their work undone.

By chance of birth one mother's son
May rise to all the heights of fame;
Another youth, unloved, reviled,
Must live above a spotted name.

Oh earth, what cure can you devise
To remedy the ills of state,
Where men may rule through fraud and lies,
And those who'd serve "must stand and wait"?

So back to Christ for help we turn:
"Fill hearts with love to God and man";
His answer comes, "Love's lesson learn";
Earth's sages know no better plan.

CHAPTER THREE

Programs and Personality

"Program," pronounced "pro'-grum," with the accent on the first syllable, is the idol of the intellectuals. Attend any conference of social workers or specialists in education; listen to the bated breath with which it is spoken; otherwise sensible leaders are caught by the charm of the word and confer for days over a "pro'-grum." Grave lawmakers orate endlessly for the public and confer behind closed doors for the party, all in the name of a "pro'-grum." And once the "pro'-grum" is adopted, everybody is happy, everybody goes back to business and everybody permits the "pro'-grum" to rest in peace.

Programs are necessary. No one ever got anywhere worth while without a program. I would not give much for the future of the boy or girl, man or woman, who has no program for to-morrow. Success must be planned. Whether it is a school day, a business venture or a life *in toto,* the first essential to success is a program. We are told that in the building of the Panama Canal, to encourage the men who had to toil in the killing heat, a plan of the completed canal was blueprinted and hung in every workman's shanty. So, for us, the heat of a single day's

hard battle, the disappointment of one reverse, will be forgotten as we rest our eyes on the divine blueprint of our lives. God has a program for our lives. We must discover it.

Dr. William Frederick Book of Indiana, writing in *The American Magazine,* offers the following interesting experiment: "Walk down a crowded street aimlessly and toward no particular destination. Then walk back with a definite destination in mind. Walk steadily as a man does who knows where he is going and wants to get there. You will discover the world makes way for a man who knows where he is going."

There are two proverbs that might well be written large upon the walls of national and international assemblies, of great convocations of churchmen, of every society and club large or small, and most of all upon the walls of the inner temple of our hearts. The first is: "No resolution is carried, till it is carried out." The second: "What the world needs most is not more resolutions, but more resolution." A program is just a map, a plan, a time-table, nothing more. A program will not take you one step of the way toward your destination. You can bury yourself under a mountain of time-tables and you will be right where you are. Programs are sign posts, stuck in the mud along the path of life, and if you depend on them to take you where you want to go you will stay right with the sign posts,—stuck in the mud. Something more than a program is needed. That something is the invest-

ment of personality. The value of laws depends on the character of law administrators. The value of resolutions depends on the wills of those who resolve, and the value of programs depends on the consecration of personality.

Jesus had a program for the saving of the world. To Him it was no intellectual idol to be lazily worshiped, but a way, *the way* of life service. "Go ye into all the world; preach the gospel to every creature. . . . Lo, I am with you always," this is the program of Jesus. Into the very structure of His program, He has built the three personalities essential to success.

You

"Go ye." The first personality essential for world evangelization is *you*. This is what the call of Christ meant to Peter and to the rest of the apostles. This is exactly what it has meant in every age to missionaries and martyrs, pastors and deaconesses. How many thousands of laymen and women have also personalized the call of Christ to life service, and given every possible bit of energy to building the home base with an eye single to the program of Jesus for the world!

"Go ye." Why should school friend or neighbor feel any more deeply than I do this call for the investment of personality? What right have I to dodge the direct command of the Master, content to let another do the thing that I might do? What joy we lose as we permit the call of Jesus to miss us and reach another. There is

the family gathered by the fire. Mother is tired. Just a word about her glasses lying on the sewing room table upstairs and up jumps one of the children like a flash of love to serve her. There are other children sitting by the fire. They are comfortable and lazy in their easy chairs, noses in their books. No quarrel on their part with the sister who always cherishes mother's slightest wish as a command. An easy way to dodge the call to love and service. You know the happiest member of that home. And in the great family of God you know the happy, joyous lives! They sit at the feet of the Master, rapt at the glory of His program for the world. They rise to speed away on His mission of light, happy in the assurance that His mission is theirs.

I recall an experience from the days when I was young in the ministry. A certain parish had been rent in twain by senseless quarrels. The church fuss had gone through the whole community till blood brothers would not speak to each other. The pastor left in disgust, and I was asked to preach as I had occasion on Sunday afternoons. I had vast faith in preaching. I have learned since then that something more than preaching is needed to save the world. I prepared sermons with the greatest care, pointed sermons, sermons that bit right into the heart of gossip and backbiting. The series culminated in a "magnificent effort" on forgiveness. Before me in one of the front pews sat the woman who was most responsible for the situation. I preached right

at her. I put fire and pathos into my delivery. I saw tears here and there over the congregagation. My heart began to swell with the pride of achievement.

Well do I remember standing at the door as the people were leaving. One after another they came up to me and shook my hand and told me what a wonderful sermon it was. I believed them. My eye, however, was on the chief offender as she came down the aisle, stopping here and there to say a word, evidently of great approval. As she came to me I was all set for a real confession. I expected her to come to me and say, "Pastor, I have sinned; from this day forward I shall watch my tongue, and permit the spirit of forgiveness to possess me." I even thought of the letter I should write to the president of synod telling him of my triumph. At last she was before me. These were her words: "Pastor, that was a fine sermon," good so far! "Pastor, wasn't it too bad Mrs. Brown was not here to-day to hear it?" There you are. The typical dodger! We have no right to do else than pity her. For how often have the calls of Jesus, calls for repentance, for consecration, for life service, been cheerfully fitted to some one else.

"Go ye." That is plain English. It is a direct demand for your personality. What will you do about it?

Others

There is a second personality involved in the program of Jesus, "Every creature." "Who is

my neighbor?" My neighbor is the one who needs that which I can give him. "Every creature" broadens rather than restricts the interpretation. He who has not my gospel is my neighbor. He needs that which I have to give.

In visualizing the call to evangelize the world, it is so easy to lose the sense of personality in others. We think of the vast hordes of India, of the yellow millions of China and Japan, of the unnumbered multitudes in Africa. We speak of masses and classes, the submerged and the privileged groups. How hard it is for us to think in the terms of personality. It is people, folks, we seek to save.

From boyhood days there come two horrifying memories that forever changed my thinking in this regard. The first is of a mother throwing her darling child into the river Ganges as an offering to her gods. Numberless questions arose in my childish mind. "Did she love her child just like you love me, Mother? Was it really her little girl? Do missionaries tell them about Jesus who wouldn't want them to do that?" I remember the shock of the new idea that real people, real mothers, lived in India. Another story told by a missionary was of the Chinese mother thrusting a needle into the eyeballs of her sick child because she believed the demons could get out then and the child would recover. I shall never forget my horror. Mothers! Real folks, with real problems!

In a positive way my later contacts with young

men and women from unchristianized lands has strengthened my appreciation for the personalities we are seeking to relate to Christ: young men and women who, in our largest universities, take place with the brightest and best of American youth. Here comes the true zest in life service. Personality is worth every sacrifice. I cannot give to the poor with just the same joy I give to the poor man I know. All modern social work is feeling the need of the reduction of machinery and the elevation of personality.

This was Jesus' way. No other way can be good. There will be some who will always think in wholesale terms. Men have been Christianized by the nation only to prove poor trash out of which to build the Kingdom. Jesus thought in the terms of people. He gave His time, His service, His all, for just plain people. Their problems were His.

"Never a trial that He is not there;
Never a burden that He doth not bear;
Never a sorrow that He doth not share."

His way should be our way. Is it so hard to speak for Him to those we know in school or place of business?

Bertha Conde criticizes the Church of to-day rightly when she contrasts her dull apathy toward personal evangelism with the intense interest of the Church of the first century in saving souls. Machinery has been devised in our generation that would absolutely insure the evangelization of the

world. The world is still the same old world, dead in trespasses and sin. Financial programs have been devised to challenge the attention of the captains of industry and unloose their purse strings. Our missionary boards bend under alarming deficits. What is wrong with our methods? We do not love God enough; surely that is true. We do not visualize our task; surely that is the secret of the failure of our method. People will be interested by people. If the ends of the earth, with their hunger for that which we know is Christ, are ever to know Christ, in some way our Christian people must think of something more appealing than the ends of the earth. If our submerged classes in the city slums are to be housed, clothed, and fed, as this stage of civilization demands, our Christian people must think of them in different terms than classes and masses. What a joy to give my donations if I can see past the Inner Mission Society, past the consecrated workers, to that hovel my gift may make more like a home. When we discover how to personalize our objectives in the Church of Christ we will have learned how to make effective the program of Christ for "every creature."

Christ

The third personality is the personality of supremest importance. Thank God for that final word of promise to fire our hearts when they turn cold in the face of the vast program of Christ. It is a different Church from the little incon-

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sequential group to whom Jesus spoke that faces the world task to-day. Yet to-day the far reaches of non-Christian empire stagger the imagination. To the little group of the beginnings of the Church and to the millions who follow Christ to-day, He says, "Lo, I am with you always." A vast program set before us, an adequate power promised us. We have no excuse.

John R. Mott goes up and down the world "seeking to confront young men with the living Christ." Glorious crusade! The historical Christ is known. He lived and now, embalmed between the covers of a book, His story comes to us. He is not a vital figure of every day life for most of us. He finds no place in our business, our schools, our recreations, our homes. He was a great teacher. Of course He lives, but He lives in far-off heaven.

A little boy at mother's knee is hearing about Jesus. He interrupts to say, "Oh, yes, I know who He is. He is that cold, sad man down in our church window." God forgive some of our dabsters with glass and paint who caricature our Christ. Yet they alone are not to blame for the worship of a far-away Master. Jesus as a present personality has been too little preached and taught; and as a consequence His presence has been still less practised.

I recall a very good man, a one time neighbor of mine. How often I tried to show him his need of a Saviour. Always respectful toward Christ and His teachings, he insisted that he was as good

as the average, and would take his chances with the rest. My answer was that while his reputation was safe in the hands of his neighbors, yet he was missing one of the greatest joys of life. He was turning down the opportunity for fellowship with the living Lord. Too bad he waited till illness laid him low to realize his need. He missed years of the finest friendship earth affords.

Jesus is a present reality. He lives and moves with us on our daily round. The practice of His presence offers the proof positive. Not only that, Immanuel, Christ-with-us, purifies and strengthens our lives. Sit at your ledger, business man, make your entries in the consciousness that He stands looking over your shoulder. Care you to falsify a single figure? Play your game, my girl, my boy, with the Master standing by. Dare you play the game to win, fair or foul? Take Him with you, young folks, into your social life. Could He share your "good times"? Take Him with you, people, into your homes. Where are the quarreling and bickering, where the faultfinding and selfishness? Open your lives to His presence, and men will soon see that "You have been with Jesus, and have learned of Him."

The great program of Jesus calls for the surrender of your personality. In His realized, practised presence you will find power to say, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The carrying out of the program of Jesus depends directly on the ability of our present generation

of Christians to discover Jesus in every day life.

A Christian nurse who saw service in Base Hospital No. 1 in France during the great war, and who since has been offering her life service joyfully for the poor children of a great city, gave me this poem. I do not know the writer.

"My hands were growing feverish
And cumbered much with care,
Trembling with haste and eagerness
Nor folded oft with prayer,
The Master came and touched my hands
With healing in His own
And calm and still to do His will
They grew, the fever gone.

"My hands were strong in fancied strength
But not in power divine;
And prone to take up tasks at length,
That were not His, but mine.
The Master came and touched my hands,
And might was in His own;
But mine since then have powerless been
Save His were laid thereon.
'And it is only thus,' said He,
'That I can work my works through thee.' "

"Go ye—every creature—I am with you always."

CHAPTER FOUR

A CLEAR READING

Oh, turn me, mold me, mellow me for use.
Pervade my being with Thy vital force,
That this else inexpressive life of mine
May become eloquent and full of power,
Impregnated with life and strength divine.
Put the bright torch of heaven in my hand,
That I may carry it aloft
And win the eye of weary wanderers here below
To guide their feet into the paths of peace.
I cannot raise the dead;
Nor from this soil pluck precious dust;
Nor bid the sleeper wake;
Nor still the storm; nor bend the lightning back;
Nor muffle up the thunder;
Nor bid the chains fall from off creation's long enfettered limbs.
But I can live a life that tells on other lives,
And makes this world less full of anguish and of pain;
A life that like the pebble dropped upon the sea
Sends its wide circles to a hundred shores.
May such a life be mine!
Creator of true life, Thyself the life Thou givest,
Give Thyself, that Thou mayest dwell in me, and I in Thee. —*Horatius Bonar*

CHAPTER FOUR

A Clear Reading

Bertha Conde tells of a most significant conversation with a well-educated friend. "The one thing of which I am sure," he said, "is that I am not sure of anything. I want something real for the mad world to get a grip on; something solid." "How about God? He is real to some of us," she answered. "Well if He is," was his reply, "why don't you make Him real to some of the rest of us?" Here is the answerable plaint of a world seeking for Christ. Our business in life must be to give a clear testimony for the world to read.

Since the very beginning of time men have been seeking after God. The poet voices this search in these tragic lines—

"What can it mean? Is it aught to Him
That nights are long and days are dim?
Can He be touched by the griefs I bear,
Which sadden the heart and whiten the hair?
Around His throne are eternal calms,
And strong glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss unruffled by any strife,
How can He care for my little life?"

Men have gone out under the night skies and looked up into the stars seeking to read the an-

swer to their hearts' longing. They have gone out again at midday and looked into the face of the sun until blindness came, and again have raised great altars to the sun and made them run red with the blood of human sacrifice, all to no avail. They have knelt by the side of rushing rivers and sought to trace out a meaning in the swirling current, only to turn away as puzzled as they came. Mountains with their snow-capped peaks have been the center of adoration for a nation and in turn have sent no comfort from their icy reserve. Lakes and seas, trees and rocks, wonders of nature and idols hewn by his own hands, all unmoved, have heard the piteous cry of man for the assurance of God.

There is a Word that is readable. This Word is spelled with but one character, Jesus. The world has sought this Word in vain. Out of God's love the Word was sent to the world. In the Book the record of His coming carries the answers to all the queries, voiced and unvoiced, since the world began. Born in Christian homes, or early consecrated to Christ, the Book is ours, and through it the Word is ours. Our possession of the Word is a challenge to translate Him into our lives for the clear reading of those who know Him not. Here is a life service that is greater than the choice of a vocation. The consecration of all of life to the giving of a clear witness of Jesus, a writing of the Word with our characters, what could be a more insistent call?

In II Corinthians 3:3, St. Paul offers this

challenge in these words: "Ye are epistles of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not upon tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart." What a call! As St. Paul took the papyrus, or perchance it was St. Luke who wrote for him, and upon it wrote the letter of God's love, so we are to permit the Spirit to take our lives and on them, in bold hand, write the story of Jesus. We find here a great challenge which may be three-fold, a challenge to our self-respect, to our self-interest and to our sincerity.

A Challenge to Our Self-Respect

Follow the ragman as he makes his rounds. Old, dirty worn-out bits of cloth, stuffed into a bag and sold for a song. They find their way to the paper mill. Then through the mill, machinery and chemicals doing their work, till out between the rollers they come, white and clean, fine linen paper, fit for the carrying of messages between loved ones parted. So does the Spirit take our sin-soiled lives, ragged and torn with the hard wear of life, and write upon them the greatest love messages of all. If we will!

How humble we are about our ability to witness for Him. Rather should we be proud that God has chosen to win the world to His Son, through us. Dr. Joseph Parker when asked that ancient question, "Why did Christ choose Judas?" used to answer, "I have a far greater puzzle, Why did Christ choose me?" We cannot and we need

not answer that second query any more than the first. He does choose us to be the letters of His love. How it should call out our dignity; how it should bolster up our self-respect.

Have we handicaps? Have we limitations physically, mentally, in training and education? God still would use us. What a blessing the world has received from some of these physically handicapped! Miss Ada Stirewalt, almost helpless in body, made her home in China Grove, N. C., a center of inspiration for the youth of the whole section. It was like a breath of heaven to be in her presence. What little strength she possessed was dedicated without reserve to the children of the schools, to the young folks of the Church, to the needy of the community. Her short life raised the standard of musical taste for a whole section of North Carolina. Best of all, her quiet faith made real the present Christ to hundreds who otherwise would have had to be content to follow Him afar. Miss Stirewalt would not submit to her limitations. God calls us to life service. What a challenge to our self-respect. Let us justify His confidence!

A Challenge to Our Self-Interest

A growing church is a church that gives a clear, readable message of Christ. Such a Church is the one hope of the world. As citizens of a nation and as citizens of the Kingdom we have no other hope for safety, save a witnessing Church.

Whenever the Church has failed to send out its

calls to the world it has been a dying Church. Think of the early start of the North African Church. To-day it is mission ground. Why? Because it did not feel the compelling urge to tell the old, old story. If we do not feel the glory of possessing Christ we will not be concerned about helping others to possess Him. If we do count Him as our richest possession, nothing can hold us back from giving the world a clear reading of His love. It is supremely to the self-interest of the Church that Christ be preached by lip and life.

Then there are the problems of living in this day. War, for example, with its devastation of human souls, far more dreadful than its waste of lives. Think of the Chinese coolies who went away to war Christians, but returned to dig up their idols! Crime is on the increase to such a degree that thoughtful men everywhere are deeply concerned for the future. Social standards are, if not lower, surely different, to a degree that requires tremendous adjustments. Civic corruption, graft in business life, inter-racial jealousies, commercialized amusements, divorce, and any number of problems, equally as serious, demand solution. Unless they are solved, modern Christian civilization will fall. These are new problems, but as old as civilization. A study of the cycles of the eras of civilization will show that these very problems, unsolved, inevitably bring ruin.

We have Jesus. He holds the solution to all

the problems of living. He is the solution. If we would save our day, the biggest thing we can do is to give our life service as "Epistles of Christ." It is a challenge to our love for our Church; it is a challenge to our patriotism; it is a challenge to our responsibility to the age in which we live. God give us courage to accept the challenge.

A Challenge to Our Sincerity

It is a fair challenge. If we are not giving a clear page of testimony in our lives, do we really have any Christ? Can we not account for our backwardness in witness by the fact we have been trying to give something we did not have? Recall the incident of the Gate Beautiful. Peter and John hear the cry of the lame man. They cannot give him silver and gold. But Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but what I have I give thee. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, walk." What they had they gave him. Margaret Slattery suggests that a good motto for life would be just this: "What I have I give thee, and nothing more."

Let us go into the confessional with our own souls. Have we a Christ who is worth giving to the world? Is He the supreme influence in our lives? Does He enter our hearts as King and dominate our program for each day? If we have such a King, a King for whom we would willingly die, we cannot help showing Him. Our lives would be transparent as the glass. Men could

"look in" and recognize and love the divine tenant. What could be a higher ideal for life service?

A college friend volunteered for service in Africa. On his first furlough he brought back this story. He was fortunate in getting the services of a most faithful colored man. Everywhere he went this servant followed him. Soon he began to try to tell him of Jesus, but his vocabulary each time seemed to fail him. The whole story was so outside the experience of the black man he could not understand. But he did try his best. He loved his master and he wanted to understand. Finally the missionary had begun to think the fellow was purposely stupid, when one day the light of comprehension shone in his servant's face. Then, looking into the face of the missionary, he said, "If your Jesus is like you, I want to know Him." What higher tribute could a follower of Jesus desire? Have we ever had a friend or a neighbor come to look into our face and say, "If your Jesus is like you, I want to know Him"? If not, why not? It is a challenge, a challenge to our sincerity.

Shall we accept the dares of the great apostle? Our self-respect, our self-interest, our sincerity demand acceptance.

Lord, if to me that heavenly voice has spoken,
If that dread whisper all my soul has stirred,
I dare not keep a silence Thou hast broken,
Henceforth I yearn and strive to tell Thy word.

What if I give my all to this endeavor:
Youth fade, strength perish, life itself be spent?
I shall have heard the voice that speaks forever,
And, dying to obey, shall die content.

—*C. J. Blake in The Congregational Quarterly*

CHAPTER FIVE

HOME SERVICE

I would not care to sit upon a throne,
Or build my house upon a mountaintop,
Where I must dwell in glory all alone
And never friend come in or poor man stop.

God grant that I may live upon this earth
And face the tasks which every morning brings,
And never lose the glory and the worth
Of humble service and the simpler things.

—*Edgar A. Guest*

CHAPTER FIVE

Home Service

"The world is my parish" was the confident expression of the Christian vision of a Wesley. All great souls have stood upon their mountain peaks of faith and viewed the kingdoms of the world with the same assurance. The Christian Church will never be a victor Church without this sense of world mission. The self-centered Church is the Church that dooms itself to early death.

There is, however, a place for consideration of Christian service at home. It is quite possible to become so hypnotized with the vision of vast fields on faraway continents that the untouched needs at home lie unseen. Recall that Hogarth cartoon of the man in the debtor's prison. There he sits before a table, around him are scattered reams of paper covered with figures. The man in the debtor's prison is madly working to solve the national debt of Great Britain! Another more recent cartoon shows the corner of a farm-house kitchen. A young lad of about fifteen years is sitting near the stove, his chair tipped back against the wall and above his head, in a sort of dreamy cloud, you see a large motor car by the curb. The boy in evening dress is helping an

old lady out of the car as though she were the queen. It is his mother. Fine dream for a boy. None better. The lad who has no dreams of the day when he may in some measure make up for mother's constant sacrifices is an egotist and an ingrate. But wait, this is not all of the picture. Over in the corner of the kitchen we see a wood-box and a tired old lady who looks strangely like the grand dame of the motor car. She is dumping into the wood-box an arm full of wood. Jesus, too, dreamed of a world at His feet in loving loyalty, but in His visions He never lost sight of the folks who lined His pathway, the lame, the halt, and the blind; the sinful, the anxious and the suffering.

I have known of folks in my ministry who always shone with bright lustre away from home at missionary or other conventions, most talented folks who would grace any occasion. I have had brother pastors come to me and say, "It must be great to have Miss So-and-so in your congregation. She must be such a help." And I would say, "Yes, you would think so, wouldn't you? You can have her and I will give you three more like her in exchange if you have one good faithful soul to trade, one who will do earnest, prayerful work in the home church, one who will finish everything she starts and, most of all, one whose only ambition is to serve her Lord." Many a Christian eye is afflicted with far-sightedness and needs a glass that will compel vision of the calls for life service at home.

Three fields of service are within every parish, around every home, the friendless, the fortuneless and the faithless. About these three opportunities we will think, in the prayer that we may be led to a closer analysis of our neighborhood needs.

The Friendless

The friendless, how many there are around our churches! More in the city than in the country, yet there is no longer a great distinction between rural and urban. There is scarcely a rural community without its racial problem these days. Those back-road farms where our American stock has slaved and starved, under the persistent, patient toil of the foreigner have more than made them a living. A few years ago I was up in a northern New York community where this was true. I was surprised at the vitriolic hatred the older stock in this Yankee community expended on "them there Hunkies." Needless to ask whether any real attempt was being made to shape them for the community life of the future. One old lady spent most of her time in a rocking chair looking jealously across the fields at a farm house where an Austrian family was living and living well. When I asked her whether anything was being done to bring them into the church and community life, one and the same thing in this little town, she answered, "No, sir, and I wish that them there Austrians had a stayed in Australia where they belong. No, sir, we ain't asked 'em to church and we ain't agoing to."

Our churches should be the centers of Christian hospitality. No Christian church ought to need the name of "The Friendly Church," for friendliness is involved in the very name Christian. The fact that such slogans are needed for churches in our day is proof positive that the world does not recognize friendliness as an essential attribute of Christianity.

I met a young man from Brooklyn on a Chicago train recently and asking where he went to church received the following tale. He had come from a Pennsylvania town and had attended church and Sunday school there till, in his early twenties, he moved to Brooklyn. He found a church and went Sunday after Sunday for months. No one paid any attention to this stranger within the church, and, excepting for a perfunctory handshake at the door, he felt decidedly outside the inner circle of the faithful. He gave up church in disgust. Later a fellow clerk invited him to his church, one of another denomination, and he went. He was made to feel perfectly at home from the first and now is a member of their vestry. Thank God someone found him before it was too late. Of course there was some fault on his part, but the church that has no system for discovering and welcoming strangers is missing one of its God-given opportunities.

No group can do more to create the friendly atmosphere in the church than the youth. A church centered social program will do wonders toward the development of the normal family

life of the congregation. If our youth are sent out of church influences for their recreational life, we lose our influence over them in their most approachable hours. Apartment house life in the cities, with crowded conditions of living, usually with no place for the youth to entertain their friends, makes an unusual demand upon the city church. Commercialized recreation will welcome them and ruin them.

Thousands of young folks move into our cities every year. The hospice is a fine gesture of welcome for them. The Luther League of Nebraska has established a hospice in Omaha that, for example, has become home to many an otherwise friendless young man or young woman. It is no longer a charity. These young folks will gladly pay their own way. It is a home, offered in the name of Christ, to the lonesome, homesick youth in a great city! Here is a recognition of the Christian mission to offer Christian friendship to the friendless.

The Fortuneless

What of the fortuneless? A Hindu said to the missionary, "We are as bright as you who come to us from across the seas, but we have no pity. Pity makes you great." When we think of pity, not a condescending Pharisaical sort of pity, but a gentle, loving, understanding pity, we think of Jesus. The poor never have had such a friend. Some one has said, "The poor gathered around Jesus as men gather around an open fire in the winter time." Never too busy to hear their cry.

Never too hurried to stop and meet their needs.

Modern charity is highly organized and often finds its inspiration in pure humanitarianism. It may become so efficient that it loses the gentle spirit of Jesus. Christians should not miss the opportunity to use the organizations that are trained to meet human needs. Unwise relief lowers instead of lifts. The technique of relief must not be discounted. However there is something for every Christian personally to do in the war against human misery. The Christian may give for the support of organized charity. This is a good expression of Christian love. The Christian may give service for Jesus' sake, and that is still better.

The young folks' organizations are especially sensitive to the needs of the poor if permitted to know them. What a sum total of joy comes to these societies at Thanksgiving and Christmas in the packing and delivering of baskets for the poor. Every parish has its poor. They must not be pauperized. But they must be helped in the blessed name of Jesus.

There was that poor deserted mother with her little brood. She was discovered down in the basement of an east side apartment house. What a hole in which to live! Ashes piled along the cellar wall had spilled over into the one path through, so that one actually walked over an ash heap to find the door to her two rooms. And her "home"! Walls so damp that the paper was coming off in long strips. Icebox empty. Children

half clothed and hungry. That story was told to a Luther League, and it was not long till they had moved her to a brighter, cleaner place to live in a better neighborhood. Then when she had to be away from the house in the evenings to work, young folks, two by two, spent the evening in her home caring for the children. That is service to the fortuneless. And our Christian youth are always ready for that and harder calls for life service.

It means something when young folks will take their two short weeks of vacation to go to a fresh air home, as the young Lutherans of New York City go to the Wilbur Herrlich Memorial Farm. It is certainly a change from business life and the location is ideal. But the care of a bunch of east-side ruffians as wildly full of let-looseness as colts in clover, hardly could be called a rest. Meet these girls and discover their real joy in life service.

What the opportunities are for service to the poor in your parish is to be discovered. There are poor, and they are God's poor. Their hands are outstretched in a pleading call for help.

The Faithless

The faithless, what a challenge they offer! Here is the supreme mission of Christianity. Jesus came to seek and save the lost. In the first glorious years of the Christian Church every Christian was a soul winner. The Church grew by personal work. To-day a new emphasis is

rightly made on personal evangelism. We are coming back to the New Testament method for the growth of the Church.

I wonder if it is not true that many of us are more concerned about the saving of souls in Japan or China than in the saving of the lost in our own home towns. A young girl came to Commander Booth of the Salvation Army, asking for service in China. Her answer was as frank as it was necessary. "Go back, young woman, to your own home. Win that father and that brother to Christ and then come back to me for a commission to China." She accepted the rebuff, and for three years by life and lip preached Christ in her own home. First her father and then her brother were won, and she came back to Commander Booth and received her commission.

Who is responsible for the saving of the youth of your town? The pastor? He is doing all he can to win them to Christ, but he is one and they are many. Is there any group in the church better suited to the winning of the unchurched youth than the youth of the church?

I think with pride of that League that set out to win the unchurched youth of the home city. Names were gathered of young people who were met daily in school and at business, about whom there was doubt as to their church relationship. Then a canvass was made, and from this list were taken the names of regular attendants. Then the remaining prospects were parceled out among the members for personal work. Forty young people

in that town were confirmed in one long to be remembered service. Similar life service awaits doing in every parish.

Do we love Christ enough? Is He the greatest fact in our lives? Dr. Speer says that "Christ is either all in all or not at all in our lives." If He means what He should to us, we simply cannot be held back from witnessing to others. Of course we must use common sense. We must use more judgment than the good brother who became so enthusiastic about soul winning after attending a revival that he resolved to win the first man he met on his way home. It was an Italian fruit-stand man. He went straight up to his prospect, put his hand on his shoulder and looking him in the eye said, in a dramatic voice, "My man, are you ready to die?" The result was a vacant fruit stand and a badly scared Italian disappearing in the distance.

That tact must be used is taken for granted. The young folks of the church may be gathered together and given some training in approach. Any pastor would rejoice in the request for such a class. The essential principles are those of all salesmanship. The one factor that is different is the Holy Spirit who stands ready to help. The simple story of Jesus and His love is easily told. It is a joy to tell it, and men are surprisingly ready to hear it. If Jesus means what He ought to mean to us, we will find the way.

"The world is my parish." Yes, and not all the world is on the other side of the great seas.

My town is my world, as well as Liberia, or India. The missionary demand recognizes no geography. God help us to see the far and the near; and wherever the friendless, the fortuneless and the faithless lift the helpless cry for our life service, there by God's grace we will find our mission.

CHAPTER SIX

PROVINCIALISM AND KINSHIP

Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
We hear Thy voice, O Son of Man.

In haunts of wretchedness and need,
On shadowed thresholds dark with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed,
We catch the vision of Thy tears.

O Master, from the mountain side,
Make haste to hear these hearts of pain;
Among these restless throngs abide,
O tread the city's streets again;

Till sons of men shall learn Thy love,
And follow where Thy feet have trod;
Till glorious from Thy heaven above,
Shall come the City of our God.

—*Frank Mason North*

CHAPTER SIX

Provincialism and Kinship

It is a very self-satisfying custom which most of us follow, to dub the chap who is different, provincial. The origin of the word is as interesting as it is evident. When it came into our language, those who lived in a certain section, or province, and did not often travel beyond its boundaries, came to take certain similar general attitudes towards things. They wore the same sort of clothing, acquired a local dialect, and even ate the same kind of food. Those who entered their circle from the outside were outlanders, with outlandish customs. Naturally, they believed their own ways of doing and thinking were best and usually there was no false modesty in the way of expressing their opinions of the newcomers. Our new found means of transportation and communication have made their contribution toward the death of provincialism, but provincialism is still one of the largest factors in delaying the day of brotherhood.

How easy it is to consider queer that to which we are unaccustomed. How well I recall my first long trip away from my central New York home. Around my birthplace were the beautiful hills of Otsego. Past my car window were flying mile

after mile of level cornfields. The architecture of houses and barns was different. Sturdy hard maples gave way to the softer woods. What a queer country in which to live!

I remember, too, my first introduction to a gravy dish without a spoon. I was sitting at a table with strangers. I never had seen gravy poured from a spout like cream. I was the guest and must take the first helping. A fifteen-year-old boy will take no chances. No spoon in sight! "No thank you," with a sigh of despair, "I do not care for any." I watched my neighbor enviously as he tipped the dish as he had done daily for life. What a queer thing to do! Outlandish!

I have grown less timid as the years have come and gone, and I no longer go hungry for the things I like even though called by new names. What is dressing? I hold that dressing is bread stuffed into a fowl or into some cut of meat for roasting. It is that to me because it was that within my personal experience during boyhood days. In one section of Pennsylvania my hostess asked if I would have dressing and I answered promptly, Yes. Much to my surprise I was served with mashed potatoes and parsley, baked in a pan. While in Virginia I discovered my old friend gravy masking under the domino of dressing. Queer! Outlandish!

These are but types of our thinking, as we discover how even the simplest things of every day differ across the border line of our home

province. The farther we travel the more the difference. We cross national lines and the habits of the people become as hard to understand as their language. If we could be tolerant in our judgments, by each boundary crossed we would enlarge our own knowledge and extend our appreciation of others. Travel usually leads to tolerance. When we stay at home, and others come to our province to challenge our long-established customs, it is so easy to say, "Queer! Queer! Outlandish!" and let it go at that. This is the provincialism that divides mankind.

There is another strong word that I would match against provincialism. I found it as I was seeking the dictionary meaning of the word fellowship. Fellowship is allied to the word kinship and both grow from the simple word kind. Folks through whose veins run the same kind of blood are kin. Those who think thoughts of a kind, take similar attitudes towards things and live the same kind of lives are kin. Provincialism has to do with the outside of our lives. Kinship grows from the inside. Our provinces have visible boundaries, kin are kin wherever they live. Provincialism falls before kinship. We will sit willingly at the feet of our brother to learn of him, though his ways be the queer ways of the outlander. Kinship thinks first of likenesses and out of them looks upon the new with sympathy. Provincialism gloats over the different and views the foreigners with mockery or hate. In this clash Christianity recognizes its ally.

The Old Testament teaches the oneness of mankind in origin but does not stress the implications. The New Testament becomes positive in its insistence on the brotherhood of man and provides the way in Christ. To Jesus every man was potentially akin and he met him on this basis. It is this Christ attitude toward others that is the foundation of true tolerance. Before the consciousness of Christian fellowship provincialism dies in Church, in state, and in human hearts.

In Church

Divisions in the Church of Christ will always be a matter of concern to the sincere follower of Christ. Many of the divisions are due to essential differences in faith. Vastly more are to be laid at the door of differences in custom, language and temperament. Even these differences are real and cannot be bridged over by superficial plans and programs for church union. Blind unionism is as intolerant as the religious bigotry it seeks to destroy.

Because "our fathers worshiped in this mount" is not a final answer to questions as to places and methods of worship. There is weight in tradition and the burden of proof is on the new. Yet the balance that most of us use to weigh the new and different would scarcely stand the tests of the divine Inspector of scales. Even a new tune to an old hymn has little better reception in most groups than a foreigner with queer dress and queer customs. Indeed we will tolerate the for-

eigner with better grace than we will admit the tune. There are Christian groups that despise altars and crosses and gowned clergy and choirs as the invention of the devil. Other groups view the non-liturgical service as vaporish, meaningless, and ugly. I must confess to a love for the beautiful and stately in worship. I must take myself decidedly in hand to attain the attitude of worship where the traditional service of the Church is discarded. It can be done and, time after time, I have gone into such a service steeled against its barrenness, only to come away refreshed and strengthened. Tradition, training, temperament will all help to fix our tastes and habits.

Kinship demands that we seek for likes rather than dislikes. Kinship demands the constant consciousness, that, to the outlander, our ways in worship are outlandish. Such appreciation can come only by contacts. As travel conquers provincialism, so fellowship wins in the battle against intolerance. My own United Lutheran Church in America is the result of a merger between three great American Lutheran synods. It was accomplished in 1918, not by reason, surely not by argument. Our war service had thrown our leaders together in a way that won mutual appreciation. For twenty years our young folks had disregarded synodical lines in the fellowship of a youth organization, "The Luther League." For years a common service had been generally used in all three synods. These factors conspired together to create a consciousness of blood re-

lationship. From this came an attitude of tolerance and understanding. Then came union. In a larger way this same process will hasten the answer to our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one."

Opportunities for fellowship by Christians should be accepted whenever possible. Understanding follows fellowship. Kin are patient in their attempt to understand each other. The sense of a common blood lends itself to this desire. There are necessary limitations to this fellowship. To be safe it must be free. No man's witness dare be in any degree restricted. Christian fellowship demands every man's clear witness. Self-expression is the prerequisite to understanding. With such necessary reservations in mind, our circle of fellowship can widen tremendously.

Gatherings of church leaders in world conferences and their published proceedings strike at the foundations of denominational provincialism. Provincialism dies with the death of ignorance. To a lesser degree every gathering of Christians that steps over traditional boundaries offers opportunity for understanding between groups: not agreement, far from it, but mutual understanding and respect. The youth gatherings, especially, offer a supreme contribution toward understanding. Youth is charged with impatience, but youth yields the palm to age for stubborn dogmatism. The great student conventions of the Church spell out for us the story of the coming

generation of leaders who will find a ground of co-operation because provincialism died in youth.

In State

War is the blackest blot on modern civilization. We tire of hearing every moral lapse in our generation attributed to the influence of the great war. The charge stands, however, unmet by any reputable champion. As a breeder of war provincialism is a chief demon. If there was a sense of kinship that went past national boundaries there would be no wholesale killing.

There is the "Yellow Peril," still a leverage for the prying of larger navy appropriations from national budgets as well as a rich mine for the just-as-yellow press. Americans think that the Japanese are queer. Even the slant of their eyes is different. They represent a lower standard of life, in the popular mind. They are not understood, therefore they are to be regarded with suspicion. Their politeness is set down to wily cunning and their quick and clever minds are cause for fear rather than admiration. Every industrial advance, every improvement in general standards of education, every quick appropriation of the latest inventions and discovery, is cause for alarm.

Could we but enter their homes with the missionary, meet with them daily in school and market, learn to know their life, how differently would we feel about them. A Japanese mother leaning anxiously over her sick baby is just as

heart broken as an American mother. A Japanese boy stubbing his toe at play sobs just as tragically as an American boy. "Laughter and tears speak a world language." Over our national boundaries, it is people who live, men and women, flesh and blood men and women. They understand us no better than we understand them. They too are the easy dupes of an organized propaganda of hate. Differences that neighbors would patch up in a few hours unloose the gods of war; and these plain everyday folks, who love and hate, who laugh and cry, who live and die, are set to killing one another. Each to the other is an outlander. Poor fools, they believe the stories of ruthlessness, and burn with hate against the plain folks they do not know!

Provincialism faces in the modern development of transportation and communication the bridge that crosses national boundaries. Men are delving into the depths of mother earth to return with the precious ores of the age of machinery. They speed on the face of the earth at terrific rates in train and automobile. They fly to the clouds and above, whirling through the rare upper airs at one, two and, in time, three hundred miles per hour. They ride the wave in their Leviathans and beneath they find their way in the submarine, with eyes that see in the dark. They speak and their voices are carried around the world on the unseen. How can there be provincialism in the face of modern discovery and invention?

Who will manage the machinery that makes the world one? That is the question. Provincialism is not so easy in the face of the Associated Press, the radio, the telephone, the airship, the ocean liner and the international railroad. Yet war did come and no single factor ever produced more progress in scientific knowledge and invention than this same great war. The plane that carries passengers may be used for dropping bombs to destroy a hospital or poisons to wipe out life in a whole city. Better discoveries, better inventions are safe only with better men and broader men to direct them.

Provincialism may live in the great city as well as in any remote country village. I recall two friends from metropolitan New York, whose furtherest travels had been to the Catskills. Late in life they made the trip to the west coast. On their return they cornered me and for one solid hour I had to listen to the stories of great western cities with wide clean streets, wonderful mountains, limitless plains, Eden-like valleys, vast rivers, till I was ready to cry for mercy. They had the newspaper, the library, telephone and radio, but they needed to see to know. They were provincially minded in a great city. They could have found a substitute for sight in the sense of kinship. They might have known and appreciated the West if they had been patient to understand.

There were the Samaritans in the days of Jesus. They were a hybrid race. Pure blood

races always dislike the mixed bloods. They also had a hybrid religion, part Hebrew and part the inheritance from the heathen tribes, imported by their foreign conquerors during the captivities. The Jews had no dealings with them. Jesus stepped over the racial lines and not only met and won Samaritans to His friendship, but held them up as shining examples in some of His best parables and greatest miracles. The kinship sense of Jesus would not be bound by racial lines. Christian kinship demands to-day this same free appreciation of those who are different. Herein is the only safety for the world.

There is an old story of the Arab and his four sons. He sent them away to the sages for instruction in the arts of the day. On their return he offered them a test to discover, if possible, whether he had spent his wealth upon them wisely. He took them to a desert place and showed them a heap of bones, polished white in the sun and shifting sands. Turning to the first son he said, "My son, yonder lies a heap of bones, examine them with care and tell us what your learning permits." The first boy looked them over one by one, taking patient measurements, and then turning to his father said, "These are the bones of a tiger, seven years old at death and just seven feet long from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail." "Very good, my son," said the Arab; then to the second son, "You too shall look at the bones and tell me what you can add to your brother's knowledge." The second son took the bones, separated

them, placed them where they belonged, wired them cunningly together till the skeleton of a tiger stood on the desert sands. "Very good, my son," said the Arab, "I see my money was well spent on your education"; then pointing to the bones, he said to the third son, "What can you add to our knowledge of the bones?" The third son, using the arts of the sages, built flesh and muscle upon the bones, drew over them the skin of a tiger, not forgetting to place eyes in the empty sockets. Before them stood a veritable stuffed tiger. "Very good, my son," the Arab again exclaimed, and turning to the fourth son, he said, "It hardly seems possible that you can add anything to our knowledge of the bones, but you may try." The fourth son, who was cleverest of all, took his place before the stuffed tiger and made strange passes with his hands and used strange incantations learned from the wise men. Suddenly it seemed as though sparks of light shot from his finger tips to the tiger's nose, and with a great trembling the tiger came to life. The end of the story is most tragic. The tiger ate the father and his four very wise sons.

So with the clever march of our modern civilization. Every new conquest of time and space presents its new danger. We build our tigers. What if a tiger heart brings life to tiger teeth and claws! We build to our own destruction. The tiger must be tamed, trained to the harness, and driven on the mission of brotherhood. Mod-

ern life will be safe only in proportion to the growth of the sense of Christian kinship.

In Human Hearts

There is a third provincialism that is the deadliest. He who knows only what he has seen and believes only what he has touched is the narrowest provincial of them all. Materialism, under whatever name, sets its own boundaries. Its limiting ranges and seas are the senses. It will not admit that which it cannot weigh on its scales or measure with its ruler. Let the dreamer move into this earthy province and he is set down as a queer, outlandish, pitiful subject for mirth or hate. Let one speak of unselfishness, consecration, life service or sacrifice in hearing of the inhabitants of this province, and they set him down as a foreigner, talking a strange jargon. If he persists in proclaiming his idealism, a cross on a lonely hill awaits him.

What good to talk to these provincials of a God who sent His Son! Can one demonstrate for them the Holy Spirit or the atonement? Will they listen to the Easter message by an open grave, or find any satisfaction in an ever living, ever present Saviour? "Lo, I am with you always" is without the data they are trained to handle.

God forgive them for their laughing, but we must tell them of a Jesus who lives, who lives to-day. "Jesus and I are friends" is the simple definition of one saint's religion. The higher

kinship, how it challenges the worldliness of our age. Can one demonstrate it? Yes, if one has a simple faith in the truth of the Bible. Yes, if one accepts the weights and standards of heaven. Yes, if one values the experience of thousands upon thousands of faithful Christians. The practice of the presence of Christ works. Even materialism admits that, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." The Christian adds, "When I would do good or when I would do evil, Christ is present with me." In that presence there is strength.

I recall the story of the lad who went from a consecrated Christian home to college. His going meant sacrifice to an aged father and mother. Cut loose from the apron strings he fell in with the wrong crowd. A friend of his parents came on a visit to the college town and went to his dormitory to call. The lad was out and one of his friends pointed out his room and suggested that he go in and wait. This he did. On every side were the sure evidences of dissipation. Salacious books on the table and suggestive pictures on the walls. Everywhere the disorder that some way reveals the lowering of the standards of living. He sat down, but was sickened as he thought of those faithful neighbors back home and their life of sacrifice for a boy who was going wrong. He could stay no longer, and went away without seeing the boy. Back home he avoided old neighbors, for he did not want to answer their persistent questions. As he sat in

his study chair thinking, thinking how he might bring the boy to his senses, his eyes rested on a favorite picture of Jesus, Hunt's masterpiece, "The Shadow of Death." Inspiration came, and he took the painting from the wall, wrapped it carefully and sent it to his neighbor's son.

The college boy was alone when the package came. He opened it with curiosity and discovering the picture laughed cynically and set it carelessly on the floor with face turned to the wall. Then he went and sat down. Somehow he felt his eyes drawn toward the painting and half apologizing to himself he went over and turned the picture around. Then he sat for a long time looking into the Master's face. He studied all the details, the mother kneeling at the chest of kingly treasures, the workman's tools and the shadow of the cross upon the wall of the carpenter shop. But his eyes always came back to dwell on the face of Jesus.

His next move was to look for a place to hang the picture. In order to place it in good light it was necessary to take down some of the lewd lithographs. Having placed it, he began to see its inconsistency with the rest and one after the other the walls were cleared of all that could not stand the test of the Master's presence. Then he thought of the books and tearing them he threw them in a basket with the lithos. Then he noted the disorder of the room and working swiftly he soon had the setting for the Christ as fit as he could make it.

This is the power of the practiced presence of Jesus. The higher kinship means a house cleaning of our souls to make them fit for the temple of Christ. Do we really believe He is here? We live in a hidebound atmosphere of provincialism. It is not strange if we yield now and then to its influence and lose our sense of His presence. How shall we find Him again? How shall we find Him when all around us are living for earth and earth alone? The way to realize His presence is to practise His power. To-day, to-morrow, to live as in His fellowship, is to set out on a sure road to His feet.

Yes, it is Christian kinship that is the hope of a provincially minded world. Dr. Gilkey tells of a student experience in Germany before the war. There was a convention of atheists and at one session speaker after speaker had been tearing at the foundation stones of Christian truth. He noticed an old woman sitting in the front row of the gallery, showing decided disgust at the proceedings. Finally an elderly gentleman furnished the climax to the session in a very learned and very sarcastic attack on the divinity of Jesus. This was too much for the old lady. Standing up, and leaning over the rail, she shook her fists at the speaker, and shouted at the top of her shrill voice, "You can talk from now to doomsday, old man, but the world cannot live without Jesus Christ." And she is everlastingly right.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SUPREME MOTIVE

"Not I, but Christ," be honored, loved, exalted;
"Not I, but Christ," be seen, be known, be heard;
"Not I, but Christ," in every look and action,
"Not I, but Christ," in every thought and word.

"Not I, but Christ," in lowly, silent labor;
"Not I, but Christ," in humble, earnest toil:
Christ, only Christ! no show, no ostentation;
Christ, only Christ! the gatherer of the spoil.

Christ, only Christ, ere long will fill my vision;
Glory excelling soon, full soon I'll see—
Christ, only Christ, my every wish fulfilling—
Christ, only Christ, my all in all to be.

A. A. F. in Northfield Hymnal

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Supreme Motive

Motives do count. It is not quite satisfactory to the thinking Christian to say that Christianity is the way, and nothing more. The way past my door is crowded morning and night with suburbanites going to and from their city concerns. It is one way, but how varied the motives. Many are insisting that it is enough to follow Jesus. Thousands followed Jesus as He walked the streets and lanes of Palestine with the same curiosity that lines our modern city streets to see a parade. We may even follow Jesus after a more spiritual interpretation, seeking to conform to His teaching, mentally assured that His way is best for us, without sounding the depths of Christianity. Christianity is not action, is not service; it goes deeper, far deeper. We dare not confuse the fruits with the roots.

It is a perfectly legitimate ambition in life to want to be happy. Every normal person is born with that desire. There have been periods in the history of the Church when the sincere Christian felt like apologizing for a laugh. Life was predestined to gloominess by a stern God, whose fatherhood was lost in His uncompromising righteousness. The battle with that sort of long-

faced pietism is fought and won. Even the Man of Sorrows has been brought within our ken as the Good Friend of the common folk, sharer of the joys as well as the sorrows of His frends. The wedding at Cana no longer calls for apologetic interpretation but actually becomes the simple, appealing picture of a Jesus who brings aid to a perplexed host.

For Joy!

The ambition for happiness is ours by right, but what a mess the most of us make of our search for happiness. Happiness does not grow on bushes; it cannot be plucked like berries. Happiness cannot be bought by rivers of gold or mountains of bonds. Education may make more keen our dissatisfaction with life. The library or the graduate school is no certain place to seek the happy. Happiness is an attitude of mind and heart, an inner satisfaction that is never consciously sought and found. Life service is the way to happiness. Joy floods the life that gives itself for others. "They that lose their lives shall find them."

The Boy Scouts have learned this primary lesson in living. To do a good deed every day does make life worth living. To make all of life the doing of good deeds will light the face with glory from the open door of heaven. We would do well, all of us, to play the Boy Scouts' game, to-day, to-morrow, every day. A while ago the young folks were singing:

"I want to be happy,
But I won't be happy,
Till I make you happy too."

The rest of the song was rank nonsense, but these three lines are fundamentally true. For real joy, forget self in helping others.

There was that youth group from a church I well remember. On the hill in a great city stood a dark, forbidding pile of stone which someone had named "Home for Incurables." What an awful name! Here were harbored the poor wrecked bodies from the institutions of the city when medical aid could do no more. Those stone-carved words over that dark portal said to the world: "Let him who enters here abandon hope." The youth group of which I speak had given a little play. It represented weeks of hard work at rehearsals and had been given in just three hours, much to the financial benefit of the League. The leader of the League came to the pastor with an inspiration. "Couldn't this play be given at some institution?" A visit to the matron of the home, and everything was set for the evening's entertainment at the Home for Incurables.

It was a rather subdued party of young folks that passed beneath the portal of the home that night. It was a still more disturbed cast that discovered the play was to be given in a long room, on a low platform along one side and without scenery. There was no backing out now. And the audience! Rows of rocking chairs, and

easy chairs, and rolling chairs, and even a few cots, carrying their burden of human wreckage. The maimed, the halt and the blind were there, all facing their entertainers with pleasant anticipation.

These splendid young folks arose to the occasion with a vim. No lack of action to-night, and the laughing and the clapping compelled pause after pause, and inspired impromptu clownishness to add to the hilarity. Finally the play was over, and an old gentleman, paralyzed from the waist down, was pushed forward in his wheeled chair to act as spokesman for the inmates. One or two things he said were memorable. "Young Christian friends, you can never know what you have done for us. This night has offered me the first truly self-forgetful laugh in months, if not in years. If you will go out along the path of life carrying that same sunshine, the autumn of your lives, even though condemned to be spent in a wheel chair, will offer joyful memories."

No doubt about the service rendered that night in the grim death house. But what of the servants? Those young folks were so full of the real joy of living that the light shone in their eyes for days. They were hardly out of the place before they were planning to come again. Right there they had learned their primary lesson in Christian service. Service brings joy.

There are your missionaries, too. It has been our high privilege to fellowship with many of

them. They leave home and friends to go across the seas among strangers, to live under strange conditions, to learn strange customs, and to be deprived of the luxuries and most of the necessities of our modern civilization. They should be a very sad and depressed lot. Far from it. They are the best of good company. I recall with great delight those Thanksgiving dinners in my home. No home folks to gather in. What is a Thanksgiving dinner without your own folks to share it! An inspiration came to call up the training school and gather in some stray missionaries. How they enjoyed our turkey. And how we enjoyed their fellowship. Mark those dates on the calendar for they were happy days. A service was rendered to God's servants, and, lo, we had purchased new joy by our serving.

High motive for Christian life service. Joy! Let youth and age learn well the lesson: Service is for joy.

With Jesus' Sight

High motive, joy, but there is a higher. As followers of Jesus we must come so close to Him that we can catch somewhat of His sympathetic look at man. As Christians here is a strong motive for life service. He served, we must serve. He looked out upon humanity with pitying eye, we must seek to see with His saving sight.

Jesus is walking along the Jericho road. A blind beggar sits by the road side with his wooden bowl before him. His voice is high and piercing

as he shouts for alms. Down the road comes the Master, talking as He walks. Wonderful words of love fall from His lips. "Never man so spake." What wonder that His disciples hang on every word. The harsh, insistent voice of the beggar breaks in on the discourse. It is all the louder now, for he has heard that the great Healer is passing along the road. Strange tales of His power over blinded eyes have filtered through to him from the daily passing crowds. Now he fairly shrieks his calls for mercy. The Master stops. The disciples are disgusted. They look at the beggar and all they see is a bundle of rags, dirty and ugly. They see a beggar and nothing more. So they try to stop his mouth. He cries the louder, "Thou son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus looks. Back of the dirt and rags, He sees a man, a discouraged, disappointed man. He sees those boyish dreams and ambitions for a man's place in the world shattered by blindness. He sees the bitter struggle with a life that in his day condemned the blind to beg or die. He sees the inner crash of a faith in kind Providence, and reads the sins that despair has written on his heart. The man that Jesus sees is the man that Jesus helps. Sight restored, heart cleansed, He sends him on his way to take his place once more in the life of his home town. Oh, to see with the eyes of Jesus is to see men; not as they are, but as they may be if He rules their lives.

Again find Jesus as He sits teaching. Mothers crowd close with their children in their arms.

They love Jesus; they would have him hold their babes in His arms and bless them. The disciples look and see just little noisy nuisances. Why don't the mothers know enough to keep them at home; or if they must bring them, why don't they keep them quiet? They try to send the mothers away. Jesus looks on those same babes and sees the men and women they may become. Perhaps He sees some of those very babes, grown to manhood and womanhood, giving their lives for love of Him. He rebukes His meddling disciples, and gives that most beautiful of invitations, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

No satisfactory service will ever be done by those who do not seek to see that which Jesus saw when He faced human need. Here is a motive that will make it possible to love the unlovely and serve the ungracious.

High motive for Christian service: to seek to see with Jesus' sight. There is a higher.

For Jesus' Sake

For Jesus' sake is the highest motive for life service. It is the one unbreakable chain to tie us to our task. A young man was working for a great corporation. Time after time he had failed the firm, and time after time he was reinstated and given another chance. He presumed on the generosity of the firm. Finally the president sent for him. "Young man, you do not deserve one bit of the patience with which we have treated

you. We have been more than lenient. I want to tell you that we are going to give you one more chance. I doubt if you are worth it. Years ago your father did me a favor I shall never forget. For your father's sake I will take a great deal from you. For your father's sake make good." This is the great appeal for patience with those for whom Jesus died. "The love of Christ constraineth." He has given Himself freely for us. Can we balk at any tasks for Him, however hard?

There was that grand old servant of Jesus who served so many years among the poor of a great city. One day he dropped into his chair heavily, and one of his younger helpers said, "Tired today?" "Yes, tired," he answered, "but happy." Then followed his story. He had not been feeling just right the day before, and on his rounds he came into a home too filthy and dirty for words. The conditions fairly made him sick. He slept on the case that night, and in the morning stopped at the grocer's for a basket of eatables to help meet their immediate necessities. He was still not up to normal and the basket was heavy. He found himself at the bottom of the stairs, but it seemed impossible to go up those long flights of stairs into that awful room. He stood a while till courage came, and step by step he made his way to the floor where they lived. He went forward and placed his hand on the broken piece of doorknob. There he stood. A strange and subtle sort of paralysis had seized his arm. He couldn't go in. After all these years

was he to turn traitor? There came flooding through him the memory of a great promise. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Unto me, ah," said he, "Jesus is on the other side of that door"; and pushing in he went through with his task till the place was clean, and the mother and children fed and all had heard the story of a Saviour.

Are there shut doors in the path of your life service? Does it seem sometimes that man's ingratitude, his ugly sinfulness, make our service impossible? If you only had the eye of Jesus to see. But you haven't. There is one thing you do have and that is the supreme motive for service, the love of Jesus. No city walls can stand against the assaults of a crusade that inscribes, "For Jesus' Sake" on its banners. Service of man for man's sake is fine, but fails dismally in the presence of some men. Then fall back on the love of Jesus and power will come to carry on.

Robert Louis Stevenson, whose soul breathed romance, once traveled on a ship with a little group of missionaries commissioned to a leper island. He spent much time with them. Sacrifice always attracted him. Finally their ship came to anchor off the island and the little boat came out for them. He had been thinking of the parting and had been planning a little farewell address. Now the time of parting had come and normal phrases just could not be said. As they were about to go over the side of the vessel he

stepped forward and, sweeping his hand out toward the island in a wide gesture, he said, "Ladies, ladies, Jesus is here to greet you."

Yes, Jesus is here; here where human need is calling for your life service. Unlovely, ungracious, ungrateful humanity cloaks the real presence of the One Altogether Lovely. Jesus is here, where duty staggers and courage falters. "I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty and ye gave me to drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and in prison and ye visited me." A sincere belief in that great pronouncement of our Lord would make heroes of us all.

Serve, serve for joy; serve with Jesus' sight; but above all find the key to all the unopened doors of service in the supreme motive for Christian life service—for Jesus' sake.

There was Peter, as the closing verses of John 13 tell the story. Jesus had come into his life to make life worth living. He had been following close to his Master for these many months and the winsome, winning personality of Jesus had become the one big interest in his life. Now Jesus is talking of going to a place to which he could not follow. All atremble at the thought he says, "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee even now? I will lay down my life for Thee." Splendid profession! But hear the challenging answer of Jesus, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for me?" Think, Peter, when it comes to the test, are you ready for the cross? How loving yet how search-

ing was Jesus with His apostles. He is like a mother, sitting in her chair, tired after a day's hard work. Her little girl comes running pell-mell across the room and throws herself into her arms and holding her tight says, "Mother, I love you, I would do anything for you." And mother, out of a memory of some unrun errands and undone tasks, looks down into her eyes and answers, "Do you really love me like that, would you do anything for me?" So does Jesus' voice ring down through the ages, past sincere, impetuous Peter, to us, challenging our professions of love. "Wilt thou lay down thy life for me?" "For me?" God grant that with lip and life we may be ready to answer, "Yes." For therein is the supreme motive for life service.

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